



# USAID | AFGHANISTAN

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

## ACHIEVEMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN

### EXPANDED ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Education is the foundation for long-term development, and USAID assistance has significantly increased Afghans' access to education. In 2002, only 900,000 boys were in school and virtually no girls. In 2014, there are eight million students enrolled in school, and more than a third are girls. One million Afghan students attend school as a direct result of USAID school construction, facility renovations, and the establishment of Community Based Schools, while millions more primary grade students have benefitted from USAID support for new textbooks, teacher training, and educational facilities. USAID has helped thousands of Afghan girls attend community-based education classes by eliminating the need to travel long, sometimes dangerous distances. USAID has built or refurbished more than 560 schools and multiple teacher-training centers, produced and distributed more than 148 million textbooks, and helped train more than 74,000 teachers. USAID support has helped the Ministry of Education and public universities manage the growth in demand for education, boost academic quality, and create new higher education opportunities. According to The Asia Foundation's 2013 Survey of the Afghan People, 72 percent of Afghans are satisfied with the availability of education for children.

### BUILT A NATIONAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

Since 2002, Afghanistan's healthcare system was rebuilt with contributions from USAID, the Ministry of Public Health, and other donors. The new system has improved the health and life expectancy of Afghans from 42 years in 2002 to 64 years in 2012. In 2001, few Afghans had access to trained healthcare providers. Only nine percent of Afghans lived within a one hour walk of a health facility. In 2014, 57 percent have access to a health facility less than one hour from their home. USAID has built more than 600 health facilities, which serve one million people per month.

### IMPROVED THE HEALTH OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

USAID's decade long commitment to Afghanistan's health sector has had a tangible impact on the lives of many Afghans, particularly women and children. Since 2002, USAID has trained more than 12,000 community health workers and 2,000 midwives. In 2013, more than 150,000 babies were delivered by skilled birth attendants (a 34 percent increase since 2002) and more than 420,000 pre-birth care visits were attended by skilled providers (a 54 percent increase since 2002). Afghanistan's under-five mortality rate has decreased by 62 percent.

### STRENGTHENED WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE

Under Taliban rule, women were banned from public life. Since 2002, they have made unprecedented strides. In the first round of Afghanistan's 2014 presidential elections, women represented more than 35 percent of voters. The Independent Election Commission's gender strategy, improved security, and the involvement of religious leaders encouraged women's participation. With USAID assistance, Afghanistan's judiciary is also becoming more representative: women now represent 11 percent of sitting judges and 20 percent of judges in training. USAID support for the Afghan Women Judges Association has enabled the organization's leadership to deliver critical training on gender justice and Islamic jurisprudence principles to 142 female judges.

### CREATED JOBS AND SUPPORTED ECONOMIC GROWTH

The Afghan economy has grown dramatically since 2002, with Gross Domestic Product rising from just over \$4 billion in 2002 to more than \$20 billion in 2013. USAID supports economic growth by increasing access to credit, facilitating business expansion, increasing market access, and promoting legal and regulatory reforms to attract new investment. USAID-facilitated loans have created more than 100,000 jobs since 2011. USAID-supported legal and



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regulatory reforms contributed to the development of the information communication and telecommunication sector – a \$1.81 billion per year industry employing more than 135,000 people.

## **CONNECTED AFGHANS TO ELECTRICITY, TO MARKETS AND TO EACH OTHER**

In 2002, only six percent of Afghans had access to reliable electricity. Today, 29 percent are connected to the electricity grid, including more than two million people in Kabul. A reliable road network is essential for business owners to move goods to market, families to access health clinics, and children to reach schools. Since 2002, USAID has built or rehabilitated more than 2,000 km of roads, including the Ring Road, which connects Afghanistan's urban centers.

## **SUPPORTED AGRI-BUSINESSES, FARMERS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

Seventy-five percent of Afghans rely on agriculture for their livelihood and subsistence, and USAID has invested in the sector to build the foundation for long-term economic growth and to quickly make a difference in the lives of farming families. USAID-funded programs have disbursed more than \$53 million in loans to more than 24,000 farmers and agribusinesses; facilitated over \$354 million in direct sales of agriculture products; and created more than 277,000 jobs through alternative livelihoods and stabilization activities. USAID rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure has led to increased water availability for more than 100,000 hectares of agricultural land, and has supported improved natural resources management and biodiversity conservation for more than one million hectares of land, helping Afghans farm sustainably.

## **STRENGTHENED REGIONAL CONNECTIONS**

USAID has helped Afghan businessmen and women, especially farmers, connect to regional and international markets. USAID has facilitated the export of goods worth over \$60 million including cashmere, fresh and dried fruit, nuts, and saffron to India, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and other countries. This growth in sales created nearly 8,000 full-time jobs and benefited over one million Afghan families. USAID supported the historic Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement, lowering the cost of imports and making Afghan exports more competitive by reducing the time for goods to cross the border and expanding the number of transport routes.

## **EXPANDED INDEPENDENT MEDIA**

USAID has supported the emergence of Afghanistan's independent media, which was completely dismantled during the Soviet occupation and Taliban regime. USAID has trained more than 8,600 media professionals, including more than 2,100 women. Additionally, USAID helped establish the first vocational institute for journalists and supported the launch of Arman FM and ToloTV. Afghanistan now has more than 75 private television stations and 200 private radio stations, as well as hundreds of print and online outlets.

## **ENHANCED AFGHAN GOVERNMENT CAPACITY AND REVENUE GENERATION**

USAID has worked closely with key ministries to train civil servants, increase revenue collection, and improve service delivery. By 2014, USAID had trained more than 16,000 civil servants (26 percent women), helped develop a centralized customs collection system, and increased domestic revenue from \$6.7 million in 2008 to \$1.9 billion in 2013. One highlight from this capacity building is USAID support for Afghanistan's national electric utility, Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS). DABS is on track to become fully self-sustaining. In 2012, DABS collected \$220 million from the sale of electricity – a 67 percent increase from 2010.